

DAILY LIFE

512 eat, made ready by some woman who has been at home during the forenoon, but, whether or no, the toilers will probably retire into their houses for the siesta.

512 If the day be warm there will be drowsiness in the village atmosphere and almost universal somnolence among its inhabitants for an hour or two after midday.

The Evening's Recreation

512 The real activity of the village commences at about three o'clock. The women will soon begin peeling the taro, each seated on the ground before her own house. The diurnal grand repast is in preparation, and what with the peeling of vegetables and the cooking of them a housewife has perhaps an hour and a half of final work to do. Not that this is hard or unpleasant, but rather of a sociable nature, for little groups gather round the pot in which the taro is slowly seething under a covering of leaves. The men have risen from their rest and may foregather to chew betel or will sit before their respective houses renewing some sedentary task of yesterday—for such tasks may drag on unconscionably. Often a man is content with the society of his immediate family, playing fondly with his younger children and carrying an infant in his arms.

512 Women and girls will go for water, and youths perhaps for firewood. Young bloods may appear, with a dash of 301 paint on their cheeks and an ornament of boar's tusk or shell 302 on their breasts. Their hair is glossy and greasy and their 883 fine young figures set off with a sheen of coco-nut oil. In the most indirect manner and with a somewhat studied non-chalance they are, if the truth be known, bent on courtship, desiring principally to show off their masculine charms in those quarters where it suits them.

512 As the cool of the evening approaches the village grows more animated. If one game or another happens to be in 526 vogue, youths of all ages will be boisterously engaged in it. The favourite games of the Orokaiva have something of war or chase about them. A number of players, with darts poised for throwing, stand in a kind of extended order while one boy bowls a disk-shaped section of banana stem along

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512 it is no uncommon thing to see the singers dispersing for
533 their night's rest at break of day. But happily, when a European is in their village they have the politeness and the deference to the common European habit of sleeping by night, to discontinue their concert when he extinguishes his lamp. Then the older folk and the mere boys will retire to rest and the young men will follow their own devices, either turning in or going a courting. No one will see them creep into the houses of their sweethearts where by pre-arrangement they are assured of a welcome.

512 The village is now in complete silence. It may be warm
374 and drizzling rain, or it may be clear and cold. In the latter
513 case the fires will be burning underneath the pile-houses, and now and again one will hear the voice of the father gruffly rousing one of his children to go down and stir the embers or add fuel. Then follow the sounds of sleepy and complaining acquiescence, the fire flares and crackles, the youngster creeps back to his sleeping mat, and all is silence once more.

512 At times in the dead of night one may waken to hear a
533 woman's voice raised in a solitary dirge for dead husband
152 or child—long-sustained, clear notes whose effect is singularly sad. From the standpoint of music it must be confessed that such performances are variable, yet sometimes they are of the purest tone and uttered with an admirable restraint. Long-drawn, and with a suspicion of *tremolo*, the dirge ends characteristically with two or three high-pitched sobs or whimpers. There are now no sounds other than the tireless croaking of the frogs in the swamp, the hooting of owls, or the occasional flapping of a fruit-bat among the bananas, until the tailless rooster on the house-top thinks fit to salute the coming dawn.

Occasional Activities

512 Such is the uneventful routine of the Orokaiva day. Yet although there is undoubtedly a general absence of varied interest and incident in native life compared with our own, it must not be supposed that the typical day which I have endeavoured to describe is by any means invariable. There are